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**ACE Paper 9/2025**  
***For discussion on 27 June 2025***

## **Update of Hong Kong Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan**

### **PURPOSE**

This paper provides Members with an overview of latest developments in global and national biodiversity initiatives, outlines Hong Kong's strengths in contributing to these initiatives, and seeks Members' views on the proposed direction for updating the Hong Kong Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (BSAP).

### **BACKGROUND**

2. The United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (the Convention) aims to conserve biodiversity, promote sustainable use of the biological resources and ecosystems that constitute biodiversity, and ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from genetic resources. China has been a Party to the Convention since 1993. A Party to the Convention is obliged to develop national strategies, plans or programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. The application of the Convention was extended to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) in 2011.

3. Hong Kong has been leveraging its unique identity and strengths to participate in global environmental initiatives, at the same time supporting the Central People's Government in implementing the Convention. To achieve co-existence of environmental conservation and development, the Government launched the first BSAP in 2016, proposing a total of 67 specific measures in four main areas.

4. Since the first phase of its city-level BSAP launched in 2016, all relevant government bureaux and departments have been taking forward specific actions of the BSAP under their respective purviews, under the effective co-ordination of a dedicated Inter-departmental Working Group on BSAP (IWGB). At the same time, the Government has proactively engaged relevant stakeholders in the implementation of the BSAP, in particular in enhancing biodiversity conservation measures and promoting the mainstreaming of biodiversity. The Government has also

reported from time to time the implementation progress of the BSAP to the Advisory Council on the Environment (ACE).

5. Through the concerted efforts of the society, implementation of the 67 specific actions of the first phase (2016–2021) of the BSAP have yielded tangible results, including designation of four new marine parks, establishment of the Robin's Nest Country Park and Long Valley Nature Park, complete prohibition of ivory trade, launching of the Hong Kong Biodiversity Information Hub (HKBIH), and some of the long-term actions are being continuously pursued. The implementation progress was last reported to ACE at its meeting held in September 2023<sup>1</sup>.

## **THE LATEST GLOBAL AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION**

6. In December 2022, the 15<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP15) to the Convention held under the presidency of China adopted the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF)<sup>2</sup>, which sets out two overarching goals, namely halting global biodiversity loss by 2030, and achieving harmony between humans and nature by 2050. The KMGBF contains 23 global targets with a wide spectrum of topics (e.g. habitat and species conservation, climate change, pollution / waste reduction, green finance, biodiversity risk disclosure, sustainable consumption and blue-green space) and relatively new concepts (e.g. nature-based solutions, NbS<sup>3</sup>). Recognising the varying resource conditions and circumstances among nations, both the Convention and KMGBF fully respect Parties' decision to formulate and update their national BSAPs in accordance with their respective national circumstances, priorities and socioeconomic conditions.

7. As the presidency of COP15, China was among the first to publish the updated national BSAP. The Ministry of Ecology and Environment of China released the China National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2023-2030) (NBSAP) in January 2024, outlining 27 priority actions and 75 priority projects across four priority areas, namely mainstreaming biodiversity, addressing threats of biodiversity loss, sustainable use and benefit-sharing of biodiversity, and modernisation of biodiversity governance capacities.

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<sup>1</sup> ACE paper 15/2023 reports the overall implementation of BSAP and key decisions adopted under the Convention then. It is available at: [https://www.eeb.gov.hk/sites/default/files/en/node5840/ACE\\_Paper\\_15\\_2023.pdf](https://www.eeb.gov.hk/sites/default/files/en/node5840/ACE_Paper_15_2023.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Full version of the KMGBF is available at <https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-15/cop-15-dec-04-en.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Nature-based Solutions (NbS): "Actions to protect, conserve, restore, sustainably use and manage natural or modified terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine ecosystems, which address social, economic and environmental challenges effectively and adaptively, while simultaneously providing human well-being, ecosystem services and resilience and biodiversity benefits including on mitigation, adaptation and disaster risk reduction." (Secretariat of the Convention)

8. The NBSAP provides guidance for ministries / departments and local governments in strengthening biodiversity conservation work. It is worth noting that, the NBSAP identifies the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao region as one of the key strategic areas for enhanced biodiversity conservation, and emphasises strengthening regional collaborative efforts to comprehensively improve the level of biodiversity conservation within the region.

## HONG KONG'S CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

9. Hong Kong has high population density and limited land resources. In facing challenges such as public finance constraints, we must prudently and strategically allocate resources to strengthen biodiversity conservation and support sustainable development at the same time.

10. On the other hand, around 40% of Hong Kong's land has been designated as country parks with a comprehensive network of protected area, and complemented by a robust legal framework, ensuring sustainable use of land and marine resources. This allows us to demonstrate the coexistence of economic vibrancy and environmental resilience, and serves as an example for other cities pursuing sustainable development. Moreover, HKSAR, as a leading international financial centre, can leverage our expertise in green finance to channel investments toward the areas of nature conservation and sustainable development. HKSAR's global connectivity and access to top-tier international talent also positions itself to be the bridge for international collaboration, facilitating knowledge exchanges and partnerships to advance global biodiversity conservation efforts.

## UPDATE OF THE BSAP

11. In response to the latest global and national initiatives on biodiversity, the Government has commenced updating of the BSAP. We will follow the mainstream practice worldwide to prioritise efforts to take forward relevant work in the next phase of the BSAP with reference to the guidance in the NBSAP and the local situation and conditions. This is to ensure that Hong Kong's city-level measures can effectively contribute to our country's implementation of its biodiversity policy and make meaningful contribution to the KMGBF. We believe the BSAP can be updated in accordance with the following four strategic areas.

- (a) **Area 1: Nature Conservation** – To ensure the health of local ecosystems and their continued provision of services essential to our city's prosperity, we recommend to continue to enhance conservation efforts in alignment with the NBSAP's priority actions, focusing on the need to reinforce biodiversity-related policies and governance, and protection of species and habitats. Possible actions may include implementing area-based conservation measures, such as establishing the Sam Po Shue Wetland Conservation Park and the Coastal Protection Park; restoring

ecosystems, such as coral communities, seagrass beds, and other degraded habitats; and conserving species of concern through enhanced enforcement against wildlife crimes and *ex-situ* conservation programmes for threatened species;

- (b) **Area 2: Deepening Mainstreaming** – To foster broad societal engagement, we recommend to identify suitable opportunities to consistently integrate biodiversity considerations into decision-making processes across sectors, supporting the NBSAP's priority actions that highlight awareness building and a whole-of-society effort and resources to take forward various actions to improve liveability, climate resilience and cultivation of a sustainable consumption culture in the society. Possible actions may include mobilising resources for sustainable natural resource use and conservation through funding schemes; promoting wide adoption of NbS and exploring refinement of industry-related guidelines; and encouraging community stewardship through educational activities and wildlife gardening initiatives;
- (c) **Area 3: Capacity Building** – To empower all members of the society to actively contribute to safeguarding biodiversity, thereby enhancing the capacity of the whole society, we recommend to advance knowledge, technical expertise and technology to contribute to the NBSAP's priority actions that focus on education and research, data collection and assessments, and smart and sustainable management of biological resources. Possible actions may include enabling innovative research through technology adoption and high-priority projects to address knowledge gaps; promoting knowledge transfer and talent development via platforms like the HKBIH and collaborations with tertiary institutions; and establishing related institutions, such as a research centre for advancing the modernisation of sustainable aquaculture; and
- (d) **Area 4: Collaborative Partnering** – In response to the NBSAP's emphasis on strengthening international cooperation and fostering collaborative actions in key strategic regions, including the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA), we recommend to continue to deepen collaborations with neighbouring cities in the GBA area to advance regional ecological civilisation. Such joint efforts will enable Hong Kong to share and gain valuable experiences, enhancing our contribution to the Priority Actions outlined in the NBSAP and solidifying our regional and international influence in biodiversity conservation. Possible actions may include joint initiatives with neighbouring cities on wetland and ecological corridor management, and cross-boundary efforts to combat illegal activities; sharing experiences in sustainable farming and aquaculture practices; and promoting transdisciplinary collaborations through joint research, capacity-building partnerships, and participation in forums and conferences.

12. The updated BSAP will maintain flexibility to allow for adjustments or incorporation of new measures over time, in response to evolving global and national initiatives, local circumstances and socioeconomic conditions. In addition, the IWGB will continue to coordinate BSAP implementation within the Government and conduct mid-term review, adaptively adjust implementation by considering progress and actual conditions, and serve as a platform for mainstreaming biodiversity and related capacity building. The Government will also continue to report the implementation progress to ACE regularly and solicit its views. To ensure broad awareness and engagement, the Government will actively explore diverse outreach channels, such as forums, dedicated websites and social media platforms, for sharing key achievements of the BSAP contributed by concerted efforts between the Government and other stakeholders.

13. The Government launched a two-month public consultation on the above four strategic areas of the updated BSAP on 12 May 2025. The consultation document (**Annex**) and related information are available online<sup>4</sup>.

14. The Government briefed the Legislative Council Panel on Environmental Affairs on the implementation progress and update of Hong Kong's BSAP at the panel meeting on 26 May 2025. Panel Members generally welcomed the proposed update in support of the relevant national and global initiatives, along the four strategic areas mentioned in paragraph 11 above. Panel Members also suggested the Government to enhance cross-bureau / department collaboration as well as cooperation with other stakeholders to tap into the biodiversity-related opportunities on various fronts, such as planning and development, tourism and finance; promoting use of private resources in support of nature conservation; stepping up publicity and education efforts to promote awareness of biodiversity conservation; and exploring establishment of an overall biodiversity assessment mechanism. We will take these suggestions into account when mapping out the way forward.

15. The Government will also evaluate feedback gathered from stakeholders, advisory bodies, the public, etc., and plans to finalise the updated BSAP for publication within 2025. The updated BSAP will be implemented over the coming decade (till 2035).

## **ADVICE SOUGHT**

16. Members are invited to comment on the update of the BSAP.

**Environment and Ecology Bureau**  
**Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department**  
**June 2025**

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<sup>4</sup> The consultation document and related information on the BSAP is available on AFCD's website: [https://www.afcd.gov.hk/english/conservation/Con\\_hkbsap/updating\\_bsap/updating\\_bsap.html](https://www.afcd.gov.hk/english/conservation/Con_hkbsap/updating_bsap/updating_bsap.html)